

With such music as that one could march all the way to Moscow."

The boy smiled, and raised his hand to his cap in salute, for this rough-looking man was no other than the general himself, "Fighting Macdonald," one of the bravest soldiers in France, of whom his men used to say that one sight of his face in battle was worth a whole regiment.

"Long live our general," shouted a hoarse voice, and the cheer, flying from mouth to mouth, rolled along the silent mountains like a peal of distant thunder.

But its echo had hardly died away when the silence was again broken by another sound of a very different kind—a strange, uncanny sort of whispering far away up the great white side. Moment by moment it grew louder and harsher, till at length it swelled into a deep, hoarse roar.

"On your faces, lads!" roared the general; "It's an avalanche!"

But, before his men had time to obey, the ruin was upon them. Down thundered the mass of snow, sweeping the narrow ledge path with a waterfall, and crashing down along with it came heaps of stones and gravel and loose earth, and uprooted bushes, and great blocks of cold blue ice. For a moment all was dark as night; and when the rush had passed, many of the brave fellows who had been standing on the path were nowhere to be seen. They had been carried down over the precipice, and either killed or buried alive in the snow.

But the first thought of their comrades was not for them. When it was seen what had happened one cry arose from every mouth:

"Where's our Pierre? Where's our little drummer?"

Where, indeed? Look which way they would, nothing was to be seen of their poor little favorite, and when they shouted his name, there was no answer. Then there broke forth a terrible cry of grief, and many a hard old soldier, who had looked without flinching at a line of levelled muskets, felt the tears start that that face would never be seen among them again.

But all at once, far below them, out of the shadows of the black unknown gulf that lay between those tremendous rocks, arose the faint roll of a drum, beating the charge. The soldiers started and bent eagerly forward to listen; then up went a shout that shook the air.

"He's alive, comrades! our Pierre's alive after all!"

"And beating his drum still, like a brave lad! He wanted to have the old music to the last!"

"But we must save him, lads, or he'll freeze to death down there. He must be saved!"

"He shall be!" broke in a deep voice from behind, and the general himself was seen standing on the brink of the precipice, throwing off his cloak.

"No, no, general!" cried the grenadiers with one voice; "you mustn't run such a risk as that. Let one of us go instead; your life is worth more than all of ours put together."

"My soldiers are my children," answered Macdonald quietly, "and no father grudges his own life to save his son."

The soldiers knew better than to make any more objections. They objected in silence, and the general was swinging in mid-air, down, down, down, till he vanished at last into the darkness of the cold, black depth below.

Then every man drew a long breath, and all eyes were strained to watch for the first sign of his appearing, for they knew well that he would never come back without the boy, and that the chance was terribly against him.

Meanwhile Macdonald, having landed safely at the foot of the precipice, was looking anxiously around in search of Pierre; but the beating of the drum had ceased, and he had nothing to guide him.

"Pierre!" shouted he, at the top of his voice, "where are you, my boy?"

"Here, general!" answered a weak voice, so faint that he could hardly distinguish it.

And there, sure enough, was the little fellow's curly head, half buried in a huge mound of snow, which alone had saved him from being dashed to pieces against the rocks as he fell. Macdonald made for him at once; and although he sank waist deep at every step, reached the step at last.

"All right now, my brave boy," said the general, cheerily, "Put your arms around

my neck and hold tight; we'll have you out of this in a minute."

The child tried to obey, but his stiffened fingers had lost all their strength; and even when Macdonald himself clasped the tiny arms around his neck their hold gave way directly.

What was to be done? A few minutes more, and the numbing colds of that dismal place would make the rescuer as powerless as him whom he came to rescue. But General Macdonald was not the man to be so easily beaten. Tearing off his sash and knotting one end of it to the rope, he bound Pierre and himself firmly together with the other, and then gave the signal to draw up.

And when the two came swinging up into the daylight once more, and the soldiers saw their pet still alive and unhurt, cheer upon cheer rang out, rolling far back along the line, till the very mountains themselves seemed to be rejoicing.

"We've been under fire and snow together," said Macdonald, chafing the boy's cold hands tenderly, "and nothing shall part us two after this, so long as we both live."

And the general kept his word. Years later, when the great wars were all over, there might be seen walking in the garden of a quiet country house in the south of France a stooping, white-haired old man, who had once been the famous Marshal Macdonald; and he leaned for support upon the arm of a tall, black-moustached, soldier-like fellow, who had once been little Pierre, the drummer.—*Western Catholic.*

HOW ELIHU BURRITT STUDIED.

The life of a man who could turn out of his hands, unaided and with equal ease, a horse-shoe and a Sanskrit primer, is interesting as a study of brain-power and industry; but interest of a much higher kind belongs to the life of Elihu Burritt. He became well known in Great Britain and the Continent of Europe about 1846, when he was thirty-six years of age, as the mainspring of great philanthropic movements, and continued to occupy a position of distinguished usefulness till his death in 1879; but until his thirtieth year he was spending twelve hours a day over the anvil in an obscure New England town.

He began to work as a blacksmith at the age of eighteen, extemporizing and solving astonishing problems in mental arithmetic while blowing the bellows and swinging the hammer. For instance: "How many yards of cloth, three feet in width, cut into strips an inch wide, and allowing half an inch at each end for the lap, would it require to reach from the centre of the sun to the centre of the earth; and how much would it all cost at a shilling a yard?" This was worked out without the assistance of a single figure set down. He "carried home to his brother," a schoolmaster, "all the multiplications in his head, and gave them off to him and his assistant, who took them down on their slates and verified each separate calculation, and found the final result to be correct."

When he was twenty-one he indulged himself in a term of three months' study under his brother, to make up for a winter lost through sickness five years before. These months were given to mathematics, "half hours and corner moments" being devoted to Latin and French; and were followed by six months of more energetic hammering in order to make up for the loss of a dollar a day. His amusement while at the anvil now was the study of Greek, carrying a small grammar in his hat; other languages occupied his spare moments morning, noon, and night. The student instinct grew masterful, and craved another three months' indulgence. He went to New Haven merely for the sake of the atmosphere of Yale, and set himself down to the Iliad, resolved that if he could master the first two lines in a whole day he would never ask help of any man in acquiring knowledge of the Greek language. "By the middle of the afternoon I won a victory which made me feel strong and proud, and which greatly affected my subsequent life. I mastered the first fifteen lines and committed the original to memory; and walked out among the classic trees of the Elm City and looked up at the colleges, which once had half awed me, with a kind of defiant feeling. I now divided the hours of each day between Greek and other languages, including Latin, French, Spanish, Italian, German, and Hebrew, giving to Homer about half the time."

Such a man—he was now twenty-two—seemed certainly more fit to be a schoolmaster than a blacksmith; but a year's trial proved that the sedentary life of a pedagogue was seriously injuring his health, so he exchanged it for that of a commercial traveller. Next he became a grocer; but Elihu Burritt was not one over whose grave the pungent French epigram was to be written—"Born a Man: Died a Grocer." His talents might, however, have been choked in molasses and mammon but for the trade convulsion of 1837, which mercifully tossed him naked out of the provision store. Resolved to make a fresh start in life, he walked to Boston, but failed to find there work for his hammer and food for his mind. Turning to Worcester, "he not only found ready employment at the anvil, but also access to the large and rare library of the Antiquarian Society containing a great variety of books in different languages." Here he was happy, working hard with his hands and harder with his brains, rejoicing when he could earn something above the weekly average by piece-work, so as to be free to spend longer time in the library among Icelandic, Samaritan, and Celto-Breton MSS. In August, 1838, he amused himself by writing an epistle in the language last named to the Royal Antiquarian Society of France; and "in the course of a few months a large volume, bearing the seal of that society, was delivered to him at the anvil, containing his letter in Celto-Breton, with an introduction by M. Audren de Kerdelr testing to its correctness of composition." He kept a daily journal, from which the following record of a week has been taken since his death:—

"Monday, June 18th.—Headache; forty pages Cuvier's 'Theory of the Earth'; sixty-four pages French; eleven hours forging. Tuesday.—Sixty-five lines of Hebrew; thirty pages of French; ten pages of Cuvier's 'Theory'; eight lines Syriac; ten lines Danish; ten lines Bohemian; nine lines Polish; fifteen names of stars; ten hours forging. Wednesday.—Twenty-five lines Hebrew; fifty pages of Astronomy; eleven hours forging. Thursday.—Fifty-five lines of Hebrew; eight ditto Syriac; eleven hours forging. Friday.—Unwell (at which we need not wonder.) Nevertheless twelve hours forging. Saturday.—Unwell; fifty pages Natural Philosophy; ten hours forging. Sunday.—Lesson for Bible Class."

This sort of thing went on till he had got some knowledge of all the European languages, with Hebrew, Syriac, Chaldee, Samaritan, and Ethiopic to boot. Then he took courage to write to one William Lincoln, Esq., who had showed him kindness, asking to be put in the way of earning money by translating some German book. Mr. Lincoln showed the letter to General Everett, who read it at a mechanics' institute; and the modest blacksmith was overwhelmed by seeing his letter at full length in the newspapers. "My first idea was," he tells us, "not to go back to my lodging to take a garment, but to change my name and abscond to some back town in the country, and hide myself from the kind of fame I apprehended." But he stood his ground, and nothing worse came of the incident than an invitation to dine with General Everett, and an offer from several wealthy gentlemen of "all the advantages which Harvard University could afford." Nobody could have blamed Elihu Burritt had he accepted the generous offer; at the same time we admire the sterling Puritan stuff of the man who, having got so far up the hill on his own legs, thought it best not to accept the offer of a carriage. "I declined, with grateful appreciation of the offer, preferring, both for my health and other considerations, to continue my studies in connection with manual labor." From this time he was known as the Learned Blacksmith.—*Alexander MacLeod Symington, B.A., in Sunday Magazine.*

"BE PATIENT, MY DEAR."

"Mother," said Mary, "I can't make Henry put his figures as I tell him."

"Be patient, my dear, and do not speak so sharply."

"But he won't let me tell him how to put the figures," said Mary, very pettishly.

"Well, my dear, if Henry won't learn a lesson in figures, suppose you try to teach him one in patience; and perhaps, when you have learned this, the other will be easier to both."

Mary hung her head; for she felt that it was a shame to any little girl to be fretted by such a little thing, and she began to think that perhaps she deserved to be blamed as well as Henry.—*Canada Presbyterian.*

ABOUT FERNS.—One of the most curious, as well as beautiful things we have learned by means of the microscope, is the arrangement of the seeds—or what takes the place of seeds—of ferns. These objects the botanists say are not true seeds, but spores, and they grow on the back of the fern. They are usually arranged in a tiny cup or basket, which bursts apart when ripe, and scatters its contents about. Some of the little cups have a cover like half a pea-pod, and others have two covers. Some of them are uncovered, and look like piles of oranges, of bright, gold color, and others have a sort of tiny umbrella standing up among them. One kind looks like fairy baskets of fruit, and another, thrust under scales of the fern, resembles the bows peeping out of the lace in an old-fashioned cap border. Each fern has immense numbers of these seed caps; in one sort—the Hartstongue fern—as many as eighteen millions of spores are calculated to be grown on each frond.—*Golden Rule.*

Question Corner.—No. 18.

Answers to these questions should be sent in as soon as possible and addressed EDITOR NORTHERN MESSENGER. It is not necessary to write out the question, give merely the number of the question and the answer. In writing letters always give clearly the name of the place where you live and the initials of the province in which it is situated.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

- 205. To whom did God promise that his children should be in numbers as the stars in heaven?
- 206. What were the five cities of the plain?
- 207. Who was the founder of the Hebrew nation?
- 208. What was the first miracle performed by Christ?
- 209. To whom was the name Hebrew first given?
- 210. Where is mention first made of the purchase of land?
- 211. Where is the promise, "Before they call I will answer; and while they are yet speaking I will hear"?
- 212. In what parable does Christ liken the Word of God to seed?
- 213. Did the Lord Jesus ever pay tribute money?
- 214. Where did he obtain it?
- 215. On what three occasions did an audible voice speak from heaven to Christ?
- 216. What king set up a carved image in the temple?

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

Faith shall be swallowed up in sight,
Hope in fulfilment end,
When on our twilight life the light
Of heaven shall descend.

'A sister-grace to these, more great,
Shall brighten when they wane;
O let us more and more to this,
Even in this life, attain!

The initials of the following will give the name of this most excellent grace:

- 1. The grandmother of Timothy.
- 2. The good servant of a wicked king, who kept one hundred prophets of the Lord from the vengeance of the queen.
- 3. A queen who resisted her husband's command, and was deposed.
- 4. A good man, but a bad father.

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS IN NO. 16

- 181. In the time of Saul, 1 Sam. xiii. 19.
- 182. To the Philistines, 1 Sam. xiii. 20.
- 183. Because of his conduct at the waters of Meribah, Num. xx. 10, 13.
- 184. Joshua, Num. xxvii. 18, 23.
- 185. Shake off the dust of their feet against it, Matt. x. 14.
- 186. At Antioch in Pisidia, Acts xiii. 51.
- 187. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.
- 188. The Acts of the Apostles.
- 189. Fourteen.
- 190. A letter.
- 191. Two: First and second epistles of Peter.
- 192. Three: First, second and third epistles of John.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

- 1. E-l-beth-el—Gen. xxxv. 7.
- 2. Z-ipporah—Ex. xviii. 1.
- 3. R-uth—Ruth i. 16.
- 4. A-sahel—2 Sam. ii. 18.

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.

To No. 16.—Ada L. Potts, 12 en.
To No. 15.—George Young, 11; Cora M. McIntire, 12; Fred. T. Bowes, 11; John Leask, 11; Annie R. Dickleson, 7; Frederick W. Kerr, 6.